TRIALS OF A MANAGER

Musical Genius on the Road.

Emma Nevada's Triumph in Her Native State—Faust Under Difficulties.

"A successful manager of musical stars must have unlimited tact, a genius for expedients, a silver tongue, absolute self-control, iron nerve, and a capacity for colossal bullying," said a prominent New York manager to a New York Sun reporter, the other day. "Some one said that all genius is a form of insanity, and I believe it. Managing concert tours through the country is like running a traveling Bloomingdale asylum. If the artists don't end in an asylum the manager does. Of course there are exceptions to the rule. Some of the most charming men and women I have ever met were great musicians. In fact, the greater they are the less obstreperous they are. I don't pretend to know the psychological reason for that. Perhaps success smooths them the right way. They are as full of whims as ever, but less violent—sort of mellow insanity, you know.

"One used to have queer experiences in Western concert tours; but everything is very conventional out there now, and the hotels and opera houses in all towns of any size are very fair. The funniest Western stand I ever made was in Austin, Nev. I was with Mme. Emma Nevada, and Austin was her native town. Mr. Mackay had found her, up there in the mountains, and had sent her abroad for a musical education. She succeeded, made a name for herself in Europe, and Austin was bursting with pride. She came back to America, sang in the East with great success, but didn't go West. The Austin people didn't like that, it seems—said she was stuck up and had forgotten her old friends. Nevada heard about this feeling, and one day she came to me. We were in Chicago, and she was to go back to Europe almost immediately.

"'I want to give a concert in Austin, Nev.,' she said.

"I almost fell out of my chair. 'It isn't possible,' I gasped.

"'I'll make it possible.'

"'The expense would be enormous. We could never stand it.'

"'I don't ask you to stand it. I will pay everything—any amount—only take me there. They say I am ashamed of them. I will show them.'

"Well, she got her way. I thought it was sheer lunacy but Nevada was willing to pay the bills; so we went. We had to leave our private car several hundred miles from Austin, and take common coaches on a narrow-gauge road that climbed over the mountains and walked with its head down, like a fly. About four or five stations before we struck Austin, people began to board the train.

"'Did Emma come?' They'd ask the conductor, and he'd point out our crowd. They would go back and tell the people on the platform, and everybody would howl for Emma until Nevada would go out and talk to them and shake hands with everybody she didn't kiss. A good share of the crowd went to Austin with us, but it wasn't anything to the crowd that met us at the station. Everybody in the town and all the country round had turned out, and they were the queerest crowd I ever saw. Miners, and cowboys, and Indians, and ordinary conventional people, all shaken up together, and all wild with excitement. By that time I was glad we had come. I was having the time of my life—at somebody else's expense. Talk about enthusiasm! I never knew what it was before and I never heard anything like the shout that went up when that young woman stepped off the car. Everybody yelled her name, and cheered and cheered, and she stood and threw kisses and laughed and cried. There wasn't any fake about it. I wouldn't have believed there could be so much genuine feeling anywhere in the world—it gave me, a well-seasoned manager, a brand-new thrill up and down my back.

"There was only one carriage in Austin then; and we had to drive quite a distance to the town. Nevada and I had the carriage, and the rest of the company went along in big wagons. Then came the crowd on horseback, in wagons, and on foot. We drove along a ticklish mountain road at a gallop, and every little distance along the way there were bonfires burning. Say, it was great! Nevada didn't get any rest before evening. The crowd wanted her and it would have her. She must have kissed all the children in Austin and a good percentage of the grown people; and by Joe, she acted as if she liked it. I had thought I knew her; but she was a different woman, up there in the mountains. We gave the concert in the church. The minister and I, with the assistance of the whole population, numbered the seats and made out tickets. Tickets sold at two dollars, but the house wouldn't begin to hold the crowd, and almost any old price was offered for seats. When the doors opened there was a stampede. There were fifty men in the crowd to every woman. Most of them kept on big felt hats and wore their trousers tucked into high boots. They didn't pay any attention to the aisles—just walked over the high-backed seats. I stood in the pulpit and it was funny to see that mob playing leap-frog over the seats and making for front pews, regardless of the numbers on their tickets.

"Nevada had some of her swellest clothes with her, and came out blazing with jewels and wearing a Paris gown that had cost her two thousand dollars. I never expect to hear anything again like the greeting they gave her; and I know she'll never again sing as she did that night—she sang and sang, until her voice literally gave out and the crowd saw that she couldn't keep it up any longer. Then they cheered and started for the stage in a bunch. Nevada spread out her hands and told them that if they'd wait until she went and put on a heavier, high-necked gown, she'd come back and kiss them all and give every one of them a piece of her wedding cake. She had just married Dr. Palmer, and she had packed a trunk full of wedding cake to take to Austin. She ran off to the dressing-room, and in a little while came back in a dark gown. We brought the cake in in big pans, and she fulfilled both her promises. The crowd was wild with delight and would have whooped it up all night if their Emma hadn't told them she was worn out.

"The next morning the whole town turned out to take us to the station, and, though that was fifteen years ago, I believe the mountains must be echoing yet with their 'Good-by, Emma!' Nevada said she wouldn't have missed that visit for all the money she would make that season, and it was, by long odds, the most entertaining experience I've had in my career as a manager.

"I wish I had a record of the different situations in which I've had to call concerts off and refund money to the audiences. That would throw light on the eccentricities of genius. When I think of the apologies I've been forced to make to the public, it makes me break into a cold perspiration. Nothing short of inspiration pulled me through sometimes. There's one thing about an American audience though. It's the best-natured lump of humanity on earth. I've tested it often enough to know. What will make an American audience simply angry would burn the building and raise a street-riot anywhere else. Why, one time, I had Campanini and De Vere in a concert quartet up through New England. Things hadn't been going so very well and the exchequer wasn't in a state to make me willing to see a full house lost. I had an Italian in charge of the luggage, and, naturally, he wasn't in the private car with us. We were billed for Springfield one night and I had advertised an act of 'Faust'—new scenery and gorgeous new costumes just from Paris. We came down from western Massachusetts and our car was switched off from the Boston division to the through train. At Worcester we had to change again, and I strolled out to look for my Dago. No Dago; no luggage. The man had been fast asleep at the last change and he and our baggage were in Boston. I raved around and kept the telegraph wires hot, until finally it was arranged that the luggage and the man should come through on the next train without checks. That would bring them in time for a late concert. To make a long story they never showed up until twelve o'clock that night. I was desperate. The house was all sold out and we wanted the money.

"'There's nothing for it,' I said to the quartet; 'you must sing.'

"'But eet ees impossible. We haf not ze costumes.'

"'Can't help it. Sing in evening-dress.'

"Campanini ran his eyebrows into his hair, took hold of the corners of his tight sack-coat, and whirled around.

"'Eet is all I haf,' he said.

"'No evening clothes?'

"'Een my trunk.'

"'Well, you'll sing in those.'

"He absolutely wailed, 'No, nevaire!' he declared.

"'Yes, you will,' I said.

"Then I hunted up De Vere. She had on a shabby skirt, low shoes, white stockings, and a loose sack under a seal-skin coat. All her other clothes were with the luggage. She said 'nevaire!' too; but my blood was up. The big basso was the only one that had saved anything from the wreck. He had a frock-coat that he could put on with his plaid trowsers. I had a tussle; but I persuaded them that the concert must go on, if the audience would stay by us. After that I wiped my forehead and went out to tackle the public. I explained the situation. I assured them that, personally, I would prefer returning their money. Only consideration for them prevented my insisting. Campanini would sail for Europe immediately. This was probably their only chance to hear the greatest living tenor. Campanini had refused to sing, but I had pleaded with him, and, if the audience insisted, we would go on. The audience was good-natured, as usual, and insisted.

"Oh, ye gods! I wish you could have seen that 'Faust' outfit, when the curtain went up. There wasn't any scenery so the poor singers were just seated on chairs. Faust looked like a little German sausage in a checked cover; Marguerite showed white stockings and kept on her sealskin coat, because she couldn't show her waist; and Mephistopheles literally looked like the devil. The audience was deadly still for a moment, and I held my breath. Then there was a howl of laughter, and I knew it was all right. When the singers began to grow dramatic and settle down to conventional 'Faust,' it was enough to make a wooden Indian laugh. I wake up in the night sometimes, even yet, and chuckle over it. Campanini's pride was hurt. He cried; but the rest of the singers were blessed with an American sense of humor, and said if the audience could stand it, they could.

"I never put a concert through under circumstances more unpropitious than those; but there was another night of 'Faust, that was almost as bad. Campanini was the victim again. We were down South, and Campanini had been having bronchitis, and the prima donna had been laid up with sore throat. We had been obliged to cancel five dates for full houses, and had reached the limit. Then Campanini sprained his ankle. I had gone on ahead, but received a telegram saying: 'Sprained ankle; can't sing.' I telegraphed: 'Meet me whether possible or not.' He met me, and I told him he must sing.

"'But I can not step,' he said.

"'You'll have to sing some way or other,' I said.

"He turned to his wife. 'Ah! Eet has come,' he said, 'I haf often said it. He's gone in ze head, at last; ze pauvre Gottschalk.'

"I had my way about it in the end. I made another apology to the audience. Oh, those apologies! When I have nightmare, I am always apologizing to audiences that are not good-natured. Campanini gave two acts of 'Faust' on crutches. It was side-splitting. Even Marguerite couldn't take him seriously, and nobody else tried to do it.

"But poor Companini was a good fellow in comparison with some stars I've managed. I started West with a great violinist, some time ago; and, for economical reasons, went over a road that is rather rough and full of curves. Every one on the train was sleeping peacefully, when there was a yell in the sleeping-car. I recognized the voice, and grabbed my clothes. The noise went on, increasing in volume, and using German 'langwidge wich was horful.' Then I heard my name shrieked fortissimo at high C. I tumbled into the aisle. So did every one else. There was my genius, sitting on the edge of his berth, and letting off fire and smoke at the porter and two trainmen. When he saw me, he seized me.

"'I can not sleep.'

"'What's the matter?'

"'My brain ees mad.'

"'I believe you, but what's the special matter?'

"'I can not stay een my bed.'

"'Why not?'

"'Ach Himmel—doze corners! I am broke in my back. I vill not it haf. You vill stop der engineman. He moost not around der corner go so. Go to him now. Say I haf it said.'

"I promised I'd go wrestle with the engineer; but I had a terrible time quieting the old man. Everybody thought he was a lunatic and seemed relieved when I told them he was just a musician. The conductor wanted to put him off; but I promised I would sit up with him the rest of the night and see that he didn't break out again.

"You never can tell when a crank is going to break loose. I was going to San Francisco with a very excitable pianist once, and he behaved like a cherub until the last afternoon. We were to have reached San Francisco at twelve o'clock, but were four hours late. About twelve-thirty, my man sat up very straight, took out his watch and looked at it. Then he began to talk, in a very deliberate, quiet way. I knew the symptoms and braced.

"'It is good weather,' he said, with a long pause between the words. 'There is no snow on the track. There is no excuse—and we are four hours late. A-a-a-h!' He was off. He raved at the road, and the country, and the conductor, and the reporter, and me. The more we reasoned with him the wilder he got. He told me I must do something. He wouldn't stand it.

"'Poosh the train! poosh the train!' he screamed, and we all promised we'd push the train if he'd keep quiet. Just then a boy came through with a San Francisco paper, and there was a big cut of my man on the first page. It saved us. He quieted down like a lamb—was as pleased as Punch, called the porter his dear friend, and embraced the conductor, said I was 'the pearl among manages,' and his heart's solace."

SWINBURNE'S SONG OF VICTORY.

(Astrea Victrix.)

England, elect of time,
By freedom sealed sublime,
And constant as the sun that saw thy dawn
Outshine upon the sea
His own in heaven, to be
A light that night nor day should see withdrawn,
If song may speak not now thy praise,
Fame writes it nigher than song may soar or faith may gaze.

Dark months on months beheld
Hope thwarted, crossed and quelled,
And heard the heartless hounds of hatred bay
Aloud against thee, glad
As now their souls are sad
Who see their hope in hatred pass away
And wither into shame and fear
And shudder down to darkness, loth to see or hear.

Naught now they hear or see
That speaks or snows not thee
Triumphant, not as empires reared of yore,
The imperial commonweal
That bears thy sovereign seal
And signs thine orient as thy natural shore
Free, as no sons but thine may stand,
Steers lifeward ever, guided of thy pilot hand.

Fear, masked and veiled by fraud,
Found shameful time to applaud
Shame, and bow down thy banner towards the dust,
And call on godly shame
To desecrate thy name
And bid false penitence abjure thy trust;
Till England's heart took thought at last,
And felt her future kindle from her fiery past.

Then sprang the sunbright fire
High as the sun, and higher
Than strange men's eyes might watch it undismayed;
But winds athwart it blew
Storm, and the twilight grew
Darkness awhile, an unenduring shade;
And all base birds and beasts of night
Saw no more England now to fear, no loathsome light.

All knaves and slaves at heart
Who, knowing thee what thou art,
Abhor thee, seeing what none save here may see,
Strong freedom, taintless truth,
Supreme in ageless youth,
Howled all their hate and hope aloud at thee
While yet the wavering wind of strife
Bore hard against her sail whose freight is hope and life.

And now the quickening tide
That brings back power and pride
To faith and love whose ensign is thy name
Bears down the recreant lie
That doomed thy name to die,
Sons, friends, and foes behold thy star the same
As when it stood in heaven a sun
And Europe saw no glory left her sky save one.

And now, as then she saw,
She sees with shamefast awe
How all unlike all slaves and tyrants born
Where bondmen champ the bit
And anarchs foam and flit,
And day mocks day, and year puts year to scorn,
Our mother bore us, English men,
Ashamed of shame and strong in mercy, now as then.

We loosed not on these knaves
Their scourge tormented slaves;
We held the hand that fain had risen to smite
The torturer fast, and made
Justice awhile afraid,
And righteousness forego her ruthless right;
We warred not even with these as they;
We bade not them they preyed on make of them their prey.

All murderous fraud that lurks
In hearts where hell's craft works
Fought, crawled, and slew in darkness; they that died
Dreamed not of foes too base
For scorn to grant them grace;
Men wounded, women, children at their side,
Had found what faith in fiends may live;
And yet we gave not back what righteous doom would give.

No false white flag that fawns
On faith till murder dawns
Blood-red from hell-black treason's heart of hate
Left ever shame's foul brand
Seared on an English hand;
And yet our pride vouchsafes them grace too great
For other pride to dream of; scorn
Strikes retribution silent as the stars at morn.

And now the living breath
Whose life puts death to death,
Freedom, whose name is England, stirs and thrills
The burning darkness through
Whence fraud and slavery grew.
We scarce may mourn our dead whose fame fulfills
The record where her foes have read
That earth shall see none like her born ere earth be dead.

—Algernon Charles Swinburne, in Saturday Review.

MAKING A LIBRETTO.

Plan Followed in the Golden Days of the Italian Composers.

Recent operatic librettos have been so unsatisfactory that European critics say that they accomplish their purpose no better than the librettos of the earlier days, which have been in recent years the subject of so much ridicule. The following satire, written by an Italian, is a fair illustration of the way in which the text of these old works were prepared by composer and librettist together:

The composer goes to the librettist in search of a writer who shall carry out his ideas.

"I want a libretto," says the composer, "dealing with the love of a king for a shepherdess. What do you say to that?"

"The plan is a little too simple," answered the writer, "but we can introduce complications enough. The most important is to find names for both of them. It is my opinion that the king ought to be called Ludwig and the shepherdess Caroline. What do you think of that?"

"Excellent!"

"We must arrange the first act, then. We have three numbers right away. The first will be a chorus of shepherds, then a grand aria, in which the king declares his love for the shepherdess, and finally another chorus of the shepherds. What else do you need?"

"Well, if it were possible," says the composer, "I should like a peasants' wedding, in order to introduce some music on the style of 'La Somnambula.'"

"Nothing easier. We will have them celebrate the marriage of a young friend of the king's with a young friend of Caroline's,"

"And that would give the opportunity for a short aria by the mezzo-soprano," said the composer, delighted.

"Heart beats of the bride," suggested the librettist.

"Yes; and perhaps we could put in a drinking song."

"Of course, by the chorus of wedding guests. I'll look out for that. What after that?"

"This tender tone," says the composer, "will have to be contrasted with something martial, like the 'Soldiers' Chorus' from 'Faust.'"

"Excellent. I'll have a group of recruits come unexpectedly to the wedding," said the librettist.

"And I had a comic duet in my mind, with a very taking melody in D flat."

"Good!" agrees the librettist. "I'll arrange some accident that will bring that in. The bruegroom shall be taken away to the war, as in 'Elisire d'Amore.'"

"Then," continues the composer, "I will have an aria in C sharp. That must be sung by the king. Then he must go to the war. Without a war there is no reason why a man should be the king in an opera."

"Is that all you want to put in the first act?"

"Yes," answered the composer slowly, "unless some sort of national air like the 'Sequidilla' in 'Carmen' could be brought in."

"Spanish or Polish?" asked the librettist.

"Which do you think?"

"Well, we'll leave it that way. Ludwig's country is either Spain or Poland, we can decide which after a while. It will be laid waste by an army of enemies. Caroline will disarm the invaders through her singing."

"Splendid!" answered the composer. "Then I will be able to bring in my colorature of the soprano. But how will we be able to get in the war?"

The librettist was not nonplussed. He was an experienced man.

"A shepherd can look into the wings on the right and sing: 'Oh! see a warrior comes!' Then in the orchestra the warrior's motive can be played. The chorus of shepherds then sing 'A Warrior Comes. What may that be? What may that be?' In the orchestra the warrior's motive continues, crescendo. Then the shepherd who first discovered the warrior steps two or three feet forward and sings, 'O, I recognize him well, the warrior there. The warrior there him well I recognize.' These few phrases and the march of the warriors will be all that is necessary to put the audience into a martial mood."

"Well," asks the composer, "how much will the libretto cost?"

"Two hundred and fifty francs an act," answers the librettist, and the bargain is settled.

A HOPEFUL VIEW.

He (despondently)—"Our marriage will have to be postponed. I have lost my situation, and have no income at all."

She (hopefully)—"That doesn't matter now, my dear! I've learned how to trim my own hats."

The Rev. Dr. Queen, observing the janitor wabbling about uncertainly on his new wheel in the street in front of the church, called out: "George, do you ever take a leader?" "No, Doctah Queen," replied George, with visible indignation. "I neveh take nothin' strongah 'n cawfee!"—Chicago Tribune.

DEATH OF SAMORY.

A Man Who Once Lorded It Over 500,000 People in West Africa.

The Emir Samory, who has cut a larger figure in the affairs of West Africa for the past twenty years than any other native, has just died, a prisoner in the hands of the French at Libreville, in the Gaboon region. His prestige and power had been waning for some years. About two years ago the French caught their old enemy near the northern border of Dahomey, carried him to the coast and kept him under guard, so that he might do no more mischief. They were very happy over the downfall of Samory, who had given them more trouble for many years than all the other native potentates in West Africa together.

Samory was a slave when he was a little boy. The chief who owned him gave him as a ransom to another chief, for a woman who had been taken captive. Samory's new owner was an important personage in West Africa, the Marabout Sory Idrahina, and as his little slave grew up he attracted much attention from the Marabout and from everybody else in the country who had anything to do with native politics; for Samory became a young man of great intelligence, courage and talent for intrigue. He was so bright that the Marabout made him his chief adviser. Samory always looked out for No. 1 in a very keen and able manner. One day he thought he saw a chance to better his fortunes, and so he deserted his old master and joined forces with a more powerful chief. It was a sorry bargain for the latter, for in a few years Samory turned against him, defeated him in battle and took the whole country into his own keeping. He was now a Prince on his individual account with a throne of his own, and he began to enlarge the borders of his dominion.

Samory's career of conquest was brilliantly triumphant. He compelled one petty chief or kinglet after another to beg pardon for the resistance they offered and proclaim themselves the vassal of the great Samory. He set out to conquer about 160 little States in the interior or West Africa and carried out the job with great thoroughness. By the time he got through he was the absolute master of 500,000 people in the western Soudan and lorded it over a country east of Liberia and Sierra Leone that is larger than most of the States of Europe.

But Samory was not satisfied with the empire he had carved out for himself. He wished to be master of the whole western Soudan, and on account of this ambition he got into hot water with the French. He would push into the territory they claimed on the upper Niger, and they would drive him back. Then the French would push up the Niger into Samory's realm, and he defeated many a French expedition; for it was long before the French sent a party against the powerful native that was adequate to cope with him. It was not till 1891 that they finally dealt him a series of blows that greatly damaged his prestige and stripped him of considerable territory.

The conflict waged for years after that, Samory gradually losing all he had gained, until in the last stage of the struggle he was driven from pillar to post, a mere hunted fugitive. The French flag now floats over all the territory that Samory acquired, and the old Emir probably welcomed the end that has come at last. He had lost everything that made life desirable.

TORRELLO, THE LION TAMER.

Signor Torrello was a tamer of lions—
His name in the Bible was Brown—
He could make the fierce brutes jump the rope, walk the wire,
And turn somersets and lie down—
Signor Torrello
Was quite a gay fellow
And rapidly winning renown.

Signor Torrello one day met a maiden
Who, charmed by his soul-stirring art,
Stood in front of the cage and applauded the lions
As each played its wonderful part—
Signor Torrello,
In words that were mellow,
Laid siege to the fair maiden's heart.

Signor Torrello could look at a lion
And cause it to cower in fear,
But the look that gave Leo the chills had no terrors
For the lady who's figuring here—
Signor Torrello—
Alas! the poor fellow—
Was conducted around by the ear.

Signor Torrello no longer tames lions;
The beasts turned against him one day;
The look that once charmed them had ceased to be potent,
They roared and refused to obey—
Signor Torrello,
Unfortunate fellow,
All bloody, was hustled away!

Signor Torrello, subdued and discouraged,
Now works by the day with his hands,
And is badgered for losing the look that made lions
In terror obey his commands—
Signor Torrello,
Alack! how he fell! O
His case as its own moral stands!

"I've bought a bulldog," said Farsniff, to his friend Lessup, "and I want a motto to put over his kennel. Can you think of something?" "Why not use a dentist's notice—'Teeth inserted here?'" suggested Lessup.—Tit Bits.